

Message Text

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16

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

SSO-00 /070 W

----- 086832

R 092310Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

AMEMBASSY LIMA

AMEMBASSY QUITO

AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

AMEMBASSY CARACAS

AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

AMEMBASSY ASUNCION

AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

AMEMBASSY PANAMA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMCONSUL BELIZE

AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE

AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO

AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO

AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

INFO US MISSION GENEVA 0764

SECSTATE WASHDC 6077

C O N F I D E N T I A L MEXICO 8849

E. O. 11652: GDS

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TAGS: PINT, PINS, MX

SUBJECT: EXCELSIOR LEADERSHIP OUSTED: REQUEST FOR REACTION

1. SUMMARY: THIS CABLE SUMMARIZES EVENTS LEADING TO JULY 8 OUSTER OF LEADERSHIP INFLUENTIAL MEXICO CITY DAILY EXCELSIOR AND ATTENDANT RESIGNATION OF NEARLY FIFTY TOP WRITERS AND JOURNALISTS ASSOCIATED WITH PAPER. OSTENSIBLY A MAJORITY DECISION BY WORKERS OF EXCELSIOR, ORGANIZED AS A COOPERATIVE, THE OUSTER(WE HAVE GOOD REASON TO BELIEVE) WAS COVERTLY ORGANIZED BY TOP SECURITY AIDES TO PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA AND MAY WELL RESULT IN SUBSTANTIAL MODIFICATION OF EXCELSIOR'S EDITORIAL POLICIES. WE WOULD APPRECIATE REPORTS ON ANY GOVERNMENTAL, PRESS, OR SIGNIFICANT PUBLIC REACTION TO THIS INCIDENT. END SUMMARY.

2. EMBASSY LEARNED IN FEBRUARY THAT ON ORDERS FROM PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA, TOP SECURITY AIDES OF GOM WERE UNDERTAKING MEASURES TO BRING FINANCIAL AND OTHER PRESSURE ON DIRECTOR GENERAL JULIO SCHERER GARCIA OF INFLUENTIAL MEXICO CITY DAILY EXCELSIOR WITH INTENT TO FORCE HIS OUSTER. REASONS GIVEN TO US FOR GOM DECISION INCLUDED EXCELSIOR'S ANTI-US POSTURE, AND CRITICISM OF RULING INSTITUTIONAL REVOLUTIONARY PARTY, GOM IN GENERAL, PRI PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE (NOW PRESIDENT-ELECT) JOSE LOPEZ PORTILLO, AND THE PRESIDENT HIMSELF. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS MAY HAVE PLAYED A ROLE AS WELL.

3. PRESSURE BECAME EVIDENT IN JUNE WHEN URBAN PROPERTY WHICH EXCELSIOR HAD PURCHASED IN 1959 WAS OCCUPIED BY SQUATTERS FROM WHOM EXCELSIOR HAD ORIGINALLY BOUGHT THE LAND. SOON AFTER JULY 4 ELECTIONS HERE, DISSIDENT MEMBERS OF EXCELSIOR COOPERATIVE CIRCULATED FLYERS URGING ALL MEMBERS TO ATTEND EXTRAORDINARY ASSEMBLY OF THE COOPERATIVE TO DEMAND AN ACCOUNTING BY SCHERER AND OTHER TOP EXECUTIVES FOR HANDLING OF LAND PURCHASE AND OTHER MATTERS. MEETING JULY 8 RESULTED IN "UNANIMOUS" DECISION(WHEN SCHERER AND SUPPORTERS LEFT MEETING) TO TEMPORARILY SUSPEND SCHERER AND HIS ASSOCIATES. FORTY EIGHT WRITERS, JOURNALISTS, AND ACADEMICIANS WHO REGULARLY WRITE ON EXCELSIOR OP-ED PAGE HAVE LEFT THE PAPER IN PROTEST OF THE "ATTACK ON FREEDOM OF THE PRESS". WHILE SUSPENSION IS TEMPORARY, IT APPEARS CLEAR THAT MAJOR HOUSE CLEANING HAS TAKEN PLACE AND PROBABLE THAT EDITORIAL

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LINE OF EXCELSIOR WILL UNDERGO SUBSTANTIAL MODIFICATION.

4. SCHERER GARCIA AND HIS ASSOCIATES HAVE EXTENSIVE CONTACTS THROUGHOUT HEMISPHERE AND MAY WELL SEEK TO PUBLICIZE INCIDENT AS GOM ATTACK ON PRESS FREEDOM. WHILE MANY ARA GOVERNMENTS NO DOUBT HAVE LITTLE SYMPATHY FOR EXCELSIOR, THEY PROBABLY ARE NO MORE SYMPATHETIC TOWARDS ECHEVERRIA HIMSELF, WHO HAS OFTEN LECTURED OTHER LATIN AMERICAN GOVERNMENTS ON PRESS FREEDOM

(E.G. PERU).

5. WE WOULD BE INTERESTED TO KNOW IF THIS INCIDENT PROMPTS
ANY REACTION, PARTICULARLY IN FORTHCOMING COMMUNICATIONS
MEETING IN SAN JOSE.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
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Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: NEWSPAPERS, EDITORS, JOURNALISTS, PERSONNEL MOVEMENTS, INFORMATION CONTROL
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 09 JUL 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: saccheem
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
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